

Message Text

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TO AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SF

SUBJECT: TRADE UNIONISTS MAKE DRAMATIC ANNOUNCEMENTS UPON
RETURN FROM UNITED STATES

REF: JOHANNESBURG 1040

1. NEWSPAPER REPORTS RELATING TO SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE
UNION LEADERS VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES AND THE BIENNIAL
CONVENTION OF AFL-CIO SOMEWHAT EXAGGERATED.

2. MEETING IN NEW YORK CITY ATTENDED BY SOUTH AFRICANS
AND REPRESENTATIVES OF U.S. FIRMS WAS ARRANGED BY JAMES
BREWER OF UNITED STATES-SOUTH AFRICAN LEADER EXCHANGE
PROGRAM HOSTED BY VICTOR ROCKHILL, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESI-
DENT OF CHASE MANHATTAN BANK ON NOV. 1ST AT THE BANK.
THIS WAS AN INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND THE PRESENTATIONS
WERE MADE BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONISTS, QUESTIONS
WERE ASKED BUT NO ACTION OR COMMITMENTS WERE MADE REGARD-
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ING ASSISTANCE TO ORGANIZING BLACK UNIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FIRMS PRESENT.

3. IT IS TRUE THAT PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICA DID REFER TO SACTU. THIS REFERENCE WAS DELETED, HOWEVER, BY THE RESOLUTION COMMITTEE BEFORE PRESENTATION TO CONVENTION.

4. THE RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICA PASSED BY THE CONVENTION MENTIONS THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION BUT DID NOT ENDORSE SPECIFIC ILO ACTIONS. (COPY OF RESOLUTION BEING POUCHED).

5. THE SOUTH AFRICANS DID GET ALONG WELL WITH THE OTHER INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION VISITORS MAINLY BECAUSE THEY APPEARED SINCERE ABOUT HELPING BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN WORKERS AND ARE GENERALLY NOT LOOKED UPON AS STOOGES OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT. GROBBELAAR WAS INFORMALLY INVITED TO ZAMBIA AND MVUBELO WAS INVITED TO NIGERIA AND KENYA BY TRADE UNION COUNTERPARTS. WHETHER THIS WILL LEAD TO ACTUAL VISITS ONLY TIME WILL TELL.

6. THE AGENDA OF THE AFL-CIO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 1974 DOES NOT MENTION THE SUBJECT OF PROPOSED HIGH-LEVEL AFL-CIO DELEGATION VISITING TO SOUTH AFRICA. THIS WILL IN ANY CASE BE A DECISION OF PRESIDENT MEANY WHICH THE COUNCIL MAY OR MAY NOT BE ASKED TO CONSIDER. AT PRESENT THIS VISIT DOES NOT SEEM LIKELY BUT THE MATTER HAS BEEN DISCUSSED AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE AFL-CIO.

7. VISIT OF THE FOUR SOUTH AFRICAN LABOR LEADERS, GROBBELAAR, MVUBELO, DANIELS, AND BOLTON WAS SUCCESSFUL BUT LOW KEY AND AF BELIEVES IT WAS USEFUL. THE SOUTH AFRICAN NEWS REPORTS THOUGH EXAGGERATED ARE NOT HARMFUL. THE IMAGE OF THESE LABOR LEADERS IS POSITIVE WITH MANY TRADE UNIONIST BUT SUBJECT TO CHANGE DEPENDING ON THEIR FUTURE ACTIONS AND STATEMENTS. AFL-CIO AND AALC ARE UNDER NO ILLUSION ABOUT THEIR ABILITY TO ASSIST BLACK WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND WILL BE LOOKING FOR FURTHER SIGNS THAT THIS IS WANTED AND POSSIBLE. RUSH
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